Remarks

The Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of Claim 11 and the allowability of Claims 2-5. Claim 2 has been amended into independent form by incorporating all of the subject matter of Claim 1 into Claim 2. Claim 1 has accordingly been cancelled. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to depend from Claim 2 and also contain several amendments as to form. Claim 5 has also been amended as to form.

Claim 6 has been amended into independent form. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request withdrawal of the objection based on multiple dependencies. Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to depend from Claim 6. Claims 7 and 8 also contain amendments as to form, as does Claim 9. Examination of Claims 6 – 9 on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claim 10 has been amended to place it into better form for allowance and has further been amended to recite that the photocoloring layer is a light-transmittable photocoloring layer and that an image in the light-transmittable photocoloring layer is formed by applying a light having a wavelength of from 450 to 1500 nm. The applying a light having a wavelength of from 450 to 1500 nm step may be found throughout the Specification as originally filed as well as original allowed Claim 11.

Turning now to the merits, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 is now moot in view of its cancellation.

It is pointed out in the Applicants' specification that, in the prior art, the printing plate material requires a negative or positive original picture film, and requires development, which significantly increases the time and cost of labor. However, with the recent progress in computerization, methods have been proposed for directly outputting the information having been processed by computer, onto a printing plate material. This can be followed by processing

the resulting material into a relief printing plate not requiring the provision of an original picture film. When it is attempted to practice a method of forming a pattern on an infrared sensitive layer provided on the surface of a photosensitive resin layer, by exposing it to laser beams, the method provides difficulties in regard to inspection. Even if the layer may be transparent to some degree, its UV blocking ability is unsatisfactory.

The Applicants have overcome the problem by providing a photosensitive resin printing plate material which is transparent and thereby able to accept virtual inspection, and which is capable of forming an image on the plate through exposure to light having a wavelength of from 450 to 1500 nm. This allows the operator, through the step of image formation, to utilize a material enabling a difference between the UV transmissive portion and the UV non-transmissive portion thereof, to thereby reproduce even fine relief thereon, all without requiring an original picture film.

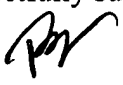
Accordingly, the photo coloring layer in this invention is UV-transmissive before colored, and is colored through exposure to light having a wavelength of from 450 to 1500 nm to become substantially UV-non-transmissive.

Referring to the patent to Damme, the foregoing features were not contemplated and Damme simply provides a photosensitive layer and a thermosensitive layer, where the thermosensitive layer is opaque to light for which the photosensitive layer has spectral sensitivity. Damme's thermosensitive layer is capable of being rendered transparent upon exposure to laser light, but is characterized in the fact that an intermediate layer which is soluble or swellable in an aqueous medium is provided between the photosensitive layer and the thermosensitive layer.

With the amendment of Claim 10 as set forth above, we respectfully submit that it is allowable over Damme. Withdrawal of the rejection is accordingly respectfully requested.

For all the foregoing reasons, we earnestly submit that the application is in proper condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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